

SHAME MANAGEMENT AND
PROBLEM RESOLUTION PRACTICE
IN THE FRAMEWORK OF
REINTEGRATIVE SHAMING THEORY:
Observations in Two Cultures

Helene Hwayeon Shin
Regulatory Institutions Network
Australian National University

Life at School Project

(<http://crj.anu.edu.au/school.html>)

- An on-going project of Centre for Restorative Justice at ANU

Objectives of the Project

- To explore social and psychological determinants of the capacity to admit to wrongdoing without excessive blame or anger towards others (see Braithwaite, Braithwaite)
- To understand consequences of poor shame management (see Ahmed, Harris)
- To suggest the creation of safe spaces for adaptive management of shame (see Ahmed, Shin)

Why Shame Management?

- Shame as a master emotion
 - The negative consequences of unresolved shame (e.g., violence, hostility & depression)
- Self-regulatory effect of shame
 - Process of moral learning
- Need to promote adaptive and healthy management of shame
 - Conceptualization of safe spaces at work (Braithwaite & Braithwaite, 2001)

Styles of Shame Management - I

(Ahmed, 2001)

■ Shame Acknowledgement

- 1) Feeling shame
- 2) Taking responsibility over wrongdoing
- 3) Making amends

Styles of Shame Management – II (Ahmed, 2001)

■ Shame Displacement

- 1) Externalising blame
- 2) Feeling displaced anger
- 3) Feeling retaliation

Styles of Shame Management – III (Nathanson, 1992)

■ Withdrawal

- 1) Feeling like hiding
- 2) Physical and psychological withdrawal from the scene
- 3) (* Embarrassment – Exposure, Harris, 2001)

Life at School: Teachers' Views and Expectation

- Surveyed secondary school teachers in Australia and Korea (total: 665) about their experiences in the workplace in relation to workmates, students and the authority, the educational community as a whole

The specific question of the study:

- How do teachers manage shame?
- Will reintegrative shaming theory predict adaptive management of shame in the workplace?

Workplace Bullying: An Increasing Phenomenon

- Global phenomenon
- Emotional disorder, depression, absenteeism, high staff turnover, lost production
- Cost Australia between 6 billion and 13 billion
 - QLD, only state follows up with legislation
- Teachers
 - 25 to 33 % are bullied in most OECD countries
 - The largest group of callers to the Bullying Advice Line (UK)

A Bullying Scenario

A new teacher (A) joins you in the staff room and eagerly asks you questions about the school. You initially answer superficially, then you stare contemptuously, finally you stand up and say, “Didn’t you do any preparation for this job?” Then you realize that the other teachers in the staff room are listening and watching you.

Reintegrative Shaming Theory (Braithwaite, 1989)

- Shaming

 - a refresher course for failed conscience



 - a moral learning process to crystallise values of community

- Need to decertify the wrongdoer as deviant



 - not to create a class of outcasts

- Bring the wrongdoer back to the community



 - to restore his dignity and relationships in the community

Reintegrative Shaming Theory (Braithwaite, 1989)

- Shaming

- ⇒ **disapproving** bullying behaviour

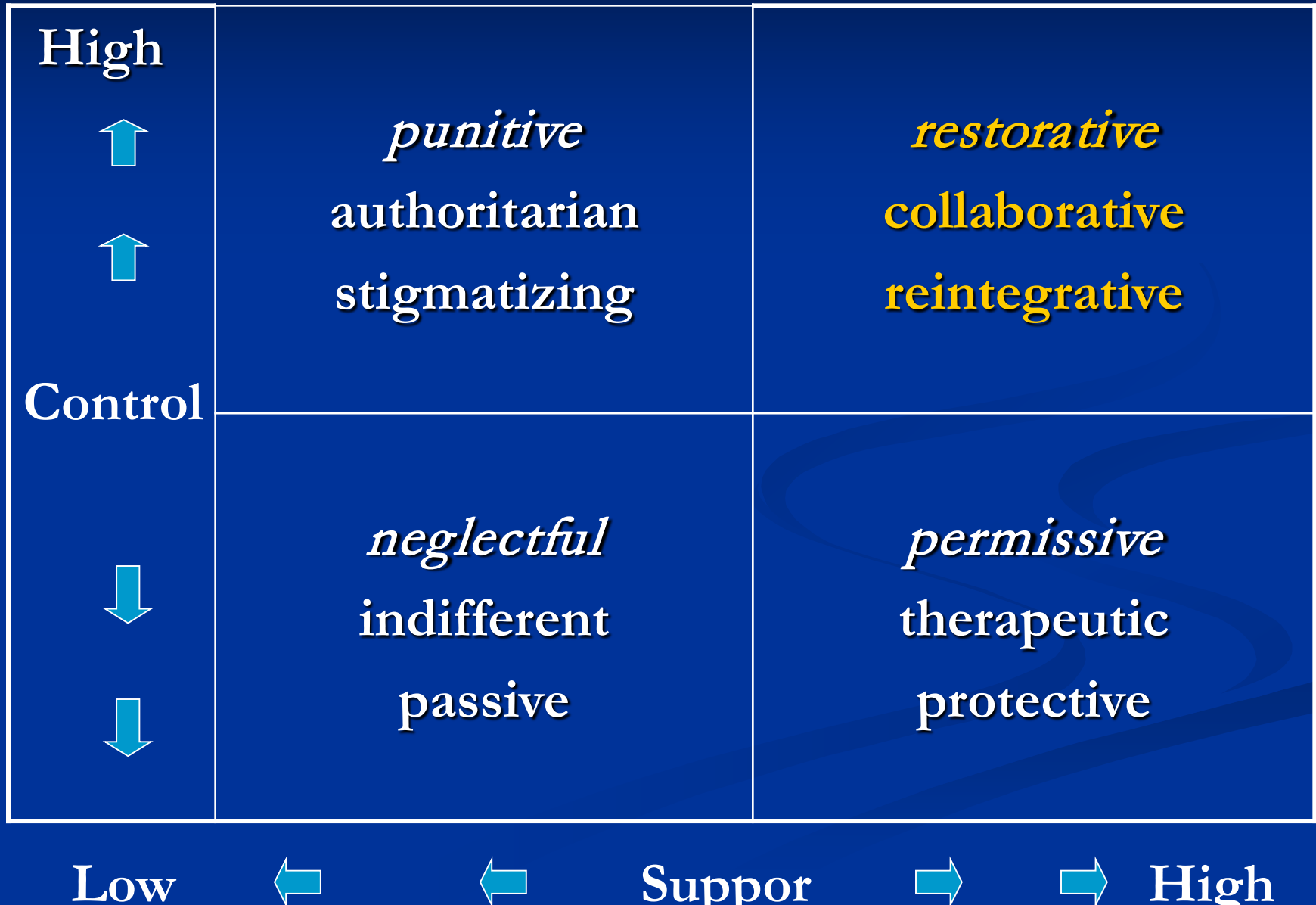
- Need to decertify the wrongdoer as deviant

- ⇒ **reintegrating** bully into the relationships

- Bring the wrongdoer back to the community

- ⇒ **reintegrative approach** to problem resolution in the workplace

Social Discipline Window



Problem Resolution Practice and Reintegrative Shaming Theory

High ↑ ↑ Disap proval	<i>stigmatizing</i> (high disapproval - low reintegration)	<i>reintegrative</i> (high disapproval - high reintegration)
	<i>neglectful</i> (low disapproval - low reintegration)	<i>tolerant and understanding</i> (low disapproval - high reintegration)

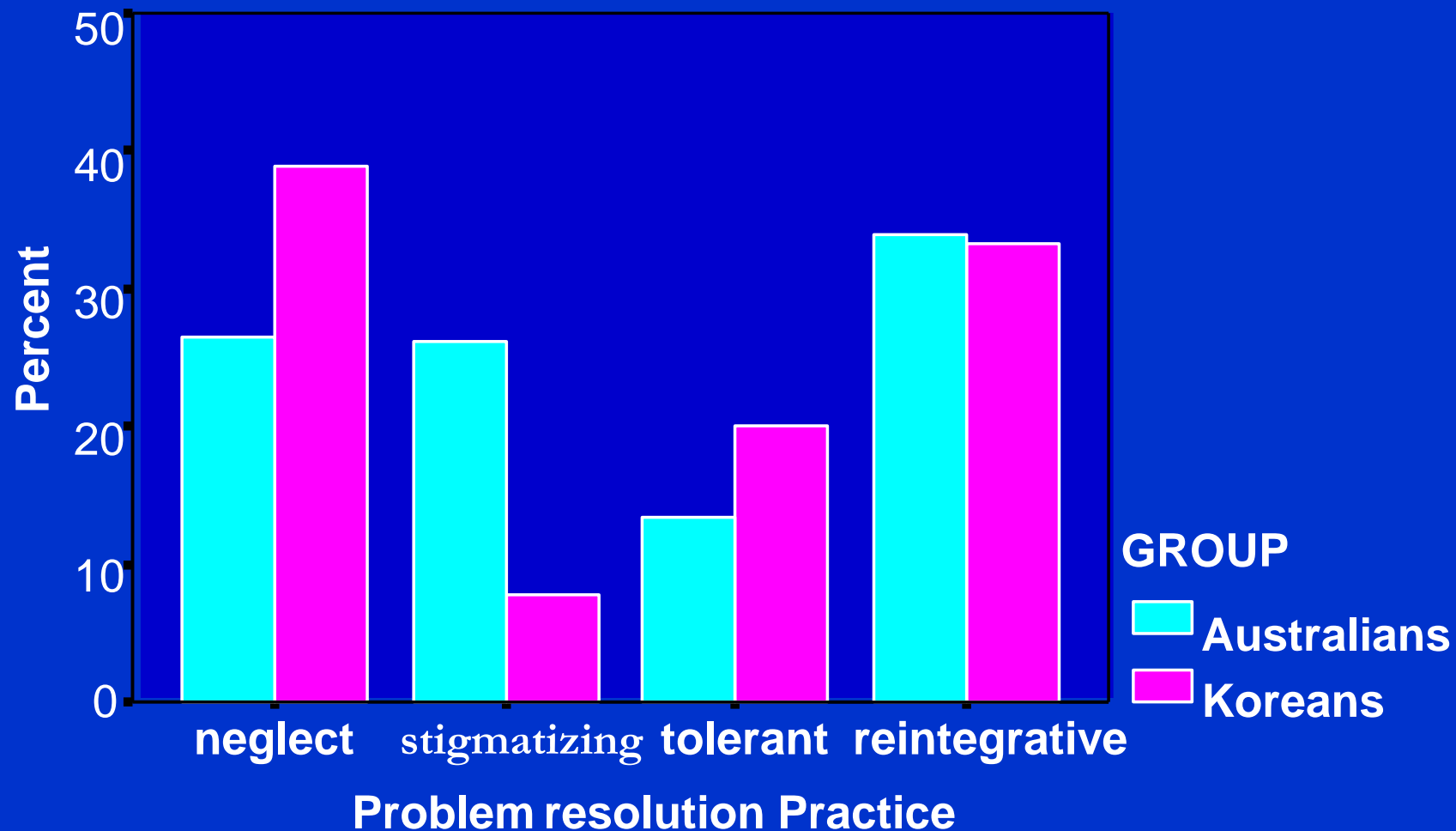
Low ← ← Reintegration → → High

Hypotheses

- Reintegrative practice would increase adaptive management of shame, that is:
 - 1) shame would be acknowledged with desire to make amends,
 - 2) shame would be dissolved safely without displacing anger onto others,
 - 3) withdrawal would not be used to avoid the acknowledgement of wrongdoing.

Findings

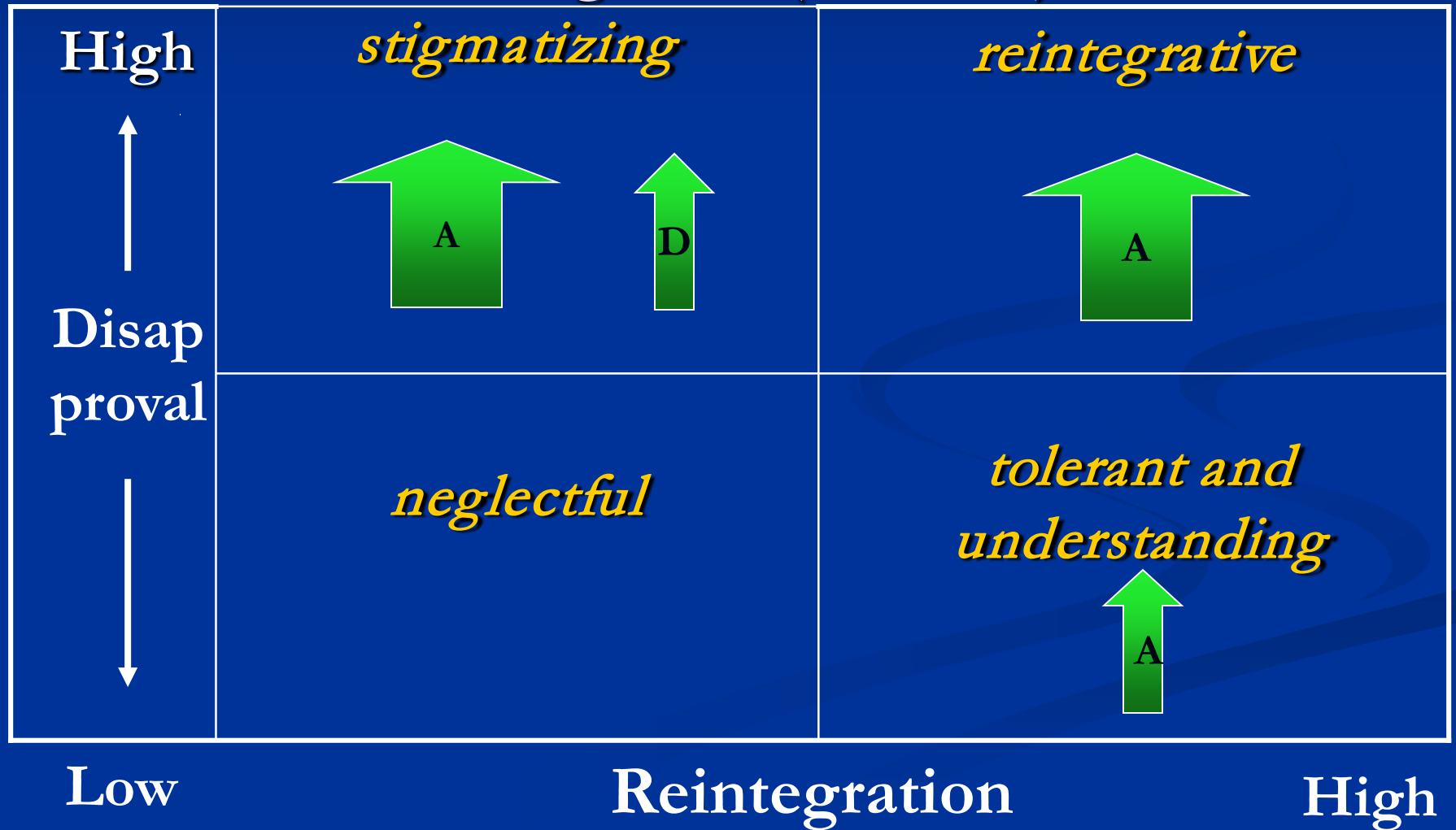
Percentage of Four Practices Prevalent Comparing Australian and Korean Workplace

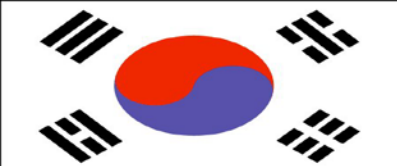




Findings (Con.)

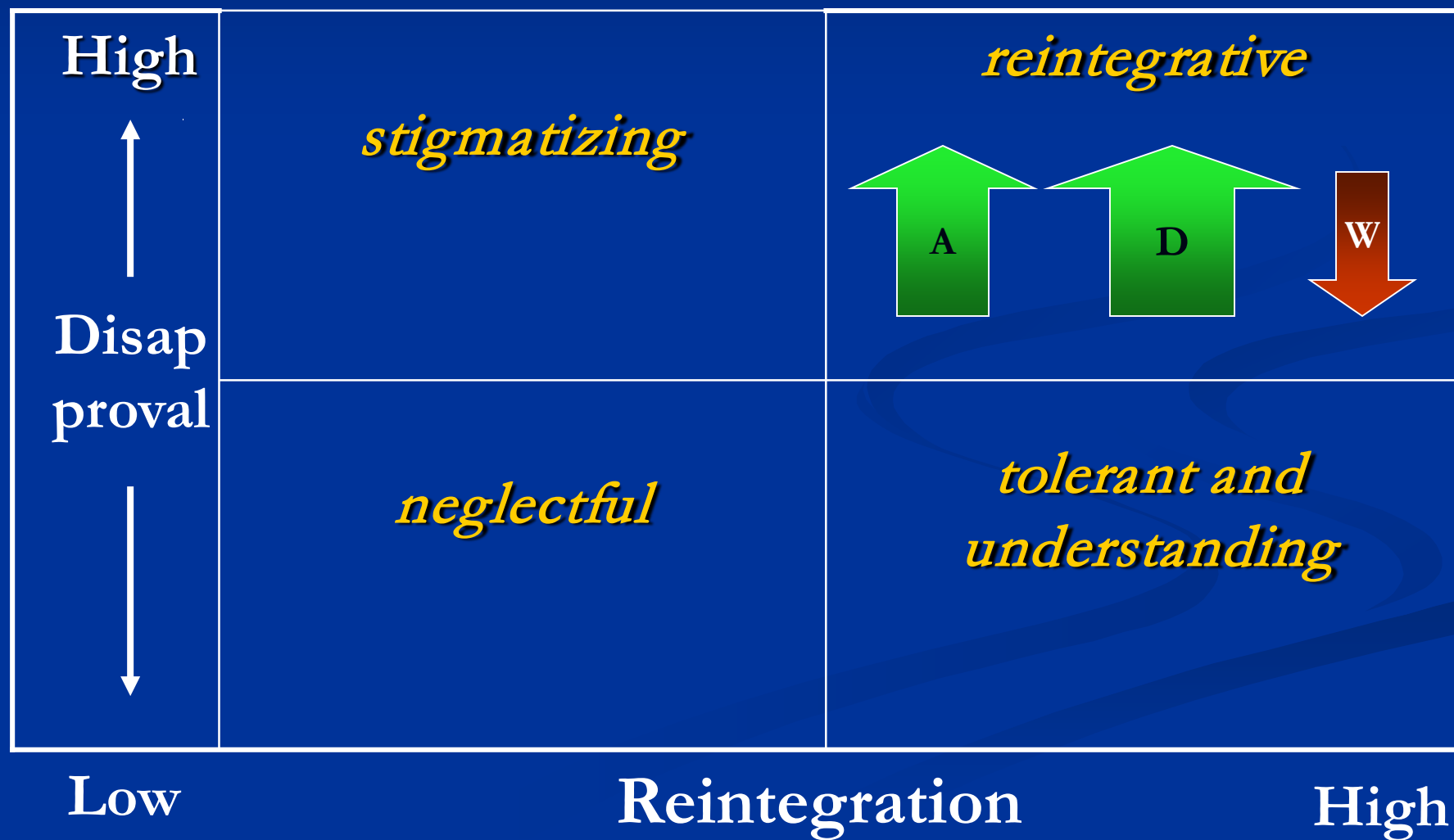
The Effect of Four Practices in Predicting Shame Management (Australia)





Findings (Con.)

The Effect of Four Practices in Predicting Shame Management (Korea)



Summary of Findings

- Indeed, problem resolution practice in the workplace had effects on how shame was managed.
- In the Australian sample, reintegrative shaming theory was supported.
- In the Korean sample, culturally specific results were found.
- In spite of complexity in some of the findings, we believe that feeling socially reintegrated is an important factor that enables bullies, victims, and onlookers to come to terms (the necessity of safe spaces).

*Love your neighbour as
yourself*

(Luke 10:27)

*Thanks!
and
Questions?*

